



**National Headquarters**

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Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Avenue NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20268

RE: Docket RM2017-3

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of Defenders of Wildlife and the imperiled species and habitats native to North America, I am writing to urge you to reconsider your proposal to increase postage rates several times the rate of inflation. These increases – estimated to increase as much as 28 to 40 percent over five years – will have a negative impact on Defenders of Wildlife's ability to carry out its mission.

Direct mail is a critical tool in our efforts to protect and conserve wildlife and it represents the single largest source of unrestricted income to our organization. Thanks in large part to the revenue raised via direct mail, this year alone Defenders was able to:

- Gather 800,000 public comments to oppose a rewrite of Endangered Species Act regulations.
- Protect over 120 million acres of Atlantic offshore waters from drilling.
- Collect 1.4 million comments in support of federal endangered species protection for gray wolves in the lower 48 states.
- Support the transfer of 55 bison from Yellowstone National Park to the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux tribes, marking the first relocation under a new program to divert bison from slaughter to ancestral lands.
- Engage 1,500 scientists in a letter to *Science*—one of the top scientific journals in the world—calling for increased funding for conservation of threatened and endangered species.
- Complete 37 electric fence projects to keep grizzly bears safe by financially helping property owners secure bear attractants like garbage, fruit trees, beehives and livestock.

Defenders of Wildlife will not be able to increase our budget to keep pace with postage increases totaling 40 percent over the next five years. Any expense, such as postage, that exceeds our means will result in necessary reductions in our use of mail. Such a reduction will lead to less revenue, limiting our reach and reducing the amount our organization can spend on critical program work.

Defenders of Wildlife urges the Postal Regulatory Commission to reconsider its proposal.

Sincerely,

Brandace Swimeley  
Vice President of Integrated Marketing

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POSTAL REGULATORY  
COMMISSION